DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 304 178 JC 890 098

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TITLE Confidential Training Needs Assessment Report.
INSTITUTION Patrick Henry Community Coll., Martinsville, VA.
PUB DATE 25 Jul 88
NOTE 12p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) --
Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Community Colleges; Courses; Criminal Law; *Educational Needs; *Employee Attitudes; Inservice Education; *Law Enforcement; On the Job Training; Police; *Police Education; Professional Training; Supervisors; Two Year Colleges

ABSTRACT

In 1988, Patrick Henry Community College (PHCC), in cooperation with Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, conducted a confidential survey of members of the Henry County Sheriff's Department and the Martinsville Police Department to determine training needs. Groups of between 1 and 15 employees from all shifts and departments were surveyed to identify the courses and programs they would actually take for additional training. Study findings, based on responses from 114 employees, included the following: (1) 58% of the respondents were between 31 and 50 years old; (2) 73% had been on the job more than 5 years; (3) 42.1% of the respondents were deputies, 17.5% were correctional officers, 10.5% were responsible for data processing or bookkeeping, and 9.6% were dispatchers; (4) 70% rated the orientation programs of their departments as either excellent or good, while 80% gave the technical training provided by the departments equally high ratings; (5) 74% stated that they needed more training to qualify for higher level jobs; (6) 102 employees indicated that they needed a course in stress management, and 104 indicated that they would be interested in a course in criminal law; and (7) supervisors were less likely to see themselves as unfair than the people they supervised. Based on study findings, recommendations for expanding PHCC's services to the police and sherrif's departments were developed. (AAC)

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Confidential Training Needs Assessment Report

Prepared for

Henry County Sheriff's Department
and
Martinsville Police Department

by

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July 25, 1988

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Introduction

The training Needs Assessment Survey described in this report was carried out at the Henry County Sheriff's Department and the Martinsville Police Department by Patrick Henry Community College in cooperation with Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech) as a service to the Commonwealth. The service is a part of a joint program between the Virginia Community College System and Virginia Tech to cooperate in providing comprehensive assistance to Virginia companies.

The Survey

A Training Needs Assessment questionnaire has been developed by Virginia Tech and the Virginia Community College System, and tested and refined at a number of companies. This questionnaire was revised by the coordinators of extended learning services and institutional research, planning and evaluation with input from the Henry County Sheriff and Chief of Police of the City of Martinsville to contain courses in Criminal Justice, which was of special interest to these clients. It was administered to groups of between one and fifteen employees from all shifts and departments over 10 days in May, 1988 at the Henry County Sheriff's and Martinsville City Police Departments during shift changes and shift meetings. Employees had adequate time to complete the questionnaire, which took 30 minutes or less. Staff from Patrick Henry Community College supervised the process.

The process was carefully explained and employees were assured that in no way could individual responses be identified. The use of the Op-Scan form was explained to each group, but most employees were familiar with this type of form. No problems were encountered with the survey method.

Employees were urged to select subject matter areas where they need additional training, only if they were sure they would actually sign up for such a course or program if it were offered on a voluntary basis. This does not eliminate the common problem of respondents tending to overselect, but our experience has shown that this reminder together with the group method of filling out the questionnaire gives a good degree of control.

It should be noted that the purpose of the survey was to determine **training needs**. Although there are several questions in the questionnaire regarding employee perceptions of the company and their immediate supervisors, the survey was **not** intended to be a detailed employee **attitude assessment.**

Survey Results

Questions 1 through 14 in the survey form are data collection inquiries. (Survey form is attached to this report.) It is interesting to note that 94% of all employees who responded to the questionnaire are between 21 and 50 years of age. Due to departmental hiring policies, there are no employees below the age of 21. Only seven employees from both departments were over the age of 50.

Only nine employees had been on the job less than one year, and the vast majority had been on the job more than five years. This indicated a degree of stability in the work force. Taken with the results discussed in the above paragraph, it indicates a group of workers who begin working at the department at an early age and stay with it for a long period of time.

All employees except one had a high school diploma and most had some college work. Only 11.4% had a college degree, either associate or baccalaureate, which

Table 1: *Background Information*

		Henry Co. Sheriff's Dept. N	Henry Co. Sheriff's Dept. %	Martinsville Police Dept. N	Martinsville Police Dept. %	Total N	Total %
1.	What is your age?						
	1) Under 21	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2) 21 - 30	26	32%	12	36%	38	33.6%
	3) 31 - 50	49	61%	19	58%	68	60.2%
	4) 51 or older	5	6%	2	6%	7	6.2%
2.	Number of years in your job?						
	1) Less than 1 year	8	10%	1	3%	9	7.9%
	2) 1 - 5 years	23	28%	8	24%	31	27.2%
	3) Over 5 years	50	62%	24	73%	74	65.1%
3.	Years with this department?						
	1) Less than 1 year	8	10%	1	3%	9	7.9%
	2) 1 - 5 years	25	31%	8	24%	33	28.9%
	3) Over 5 years	48	59%	24	73%	72	63.2%
4.	What is the highest level of education you have completed?						
	1) Less than high school	1	1%	0	0%	1	08.8%
	2) High School Grad or GED	31	38%	7	21%	38	33.3%
	3) Some college work	39	48%	23	70%	62	54.4%
	4) Associate Degree	7	9%	2	6%	9	7.9%
	5) Four year college degree	3	4%	1	3%	4	3.5%
5.	Sex:						
	1) Female	22	27%	1	3%	23	20.2%
	2) Male	59	73%	32	97%	91	79.9%
6.	Are you a supervisor/manager?						
	1) No	63	79%	21	64%	84	73.7%
	2) Yes, but no other supervisors report to me	13	16%	10	30%	23	20.2%
	3) Yes, and other supervisors report to me	4	5%	2	6%	6	5.3%
7.	Number of other workers Directly reporting to you?						
	1) None	63	77%	21	64%	84	73.7%
	2) 1 - 5	7	9%	7	21%	14	12.3%
	3) 6 - 15	7	9%	5	15%	12	10.5%
	4) 16 - 25	4	5%	0	0%	4	3.5%
	5) Over	1	1%	0	0%	1	.088%
8.	What do you do in your job?						
	1) Deputy	29	36%	19	58%	48	42.1%
	2) Correctional Officer	20	25%	0	0%	20	17.5%
	3) Court Security (Bailiff)	4	5%	0	0%	4	3.5%
	4) Secretary	2	2%	0	0%	2	1.8%
	5) Dispatcher	8	10%	3	9%	11	9.6%
	6) Investigator	6	7%	0	0%	6	5.3%
	7) Civil Process Server	3	4%	0	0%	3	2.6%
	8) Records Clerk	3	4%	0	0%	3	2.6%
	9) Data Proc/Bookkeeper/	2	2%	10	30%	12	10.5%
	10) Other	4	5%	0	0%	4	3.5%

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Table 2: *Ratings of Training Programs and Attitudes Toward Training*

		Henry Co. Sheriff's Dept. N	Henry Co. Sheriff's Dept. %	Martinsville Police Dept. N	Martinsville Police Dept. %	Total N	Total %
9.	How would you describe the orientation to the department?						
	1) Excellent	11	13%	6	18%	17	14.9%
	2) Good	41	50%	22	67%	63	55.3%
	3) Poor	19	23%	4	12%	23	20.2%
	4) Did not exist	11	13%	1	3%	12	10.5%
10.	How would you describe the technical training to do your job the department provided when you came to work?						
	1) Excellent	14	17%	7	21%	21	18.4%
	2) Good	50	61%	20	61%	70	61.4%
	3) Poor	14	17%	6	18%	20	17.5%
	4) Did not exist	4	5%	0	0%	4	3.5%
11.	How important is additional training for you?						
	1) Not important	10	12%	0	0%	10	8.8%
	2) Somewhat important	12	15%	4	12%	16	14.0%
	3) Important	38	46%	13	39%	51	44.7%
	4) Essential	22	27%	16	48%	38	33.3%
12.	How important is additional training for you to qualify for higher level jobs with the department?						
	1) Not important	11	13%	1	3%	12	10.5%
	2) Somewhat important	14	17%	4	12%	18	15.8%
	3) Important	34	41%	9	27%	43	37.7%
	4) Essential	23	28%	19	58%	42	36.8%
13.	Since you have been employed here have you been involved in any department sponsored training program?						
	1) Yes	58	72%	31	94%	89	78.1%
	2) No	23	28%	2	6%	25	22.0%
14.	Have you been involved in any other training program which would help you on your present job?						
	1) Yes	40	49%	31	94%	71	62.3%
	2) No	42	51%	2	6%	43	37.7%

indicates that the respondents tend to take college courses but not stay to completion of degree requirements.

Attitudes Toward Training

Questions 9 through 14 dealt with training programs at the company and employees' attitudes toward training. It may be seen from these results that most employees (70%) rate the orientation programs of their departments as either excellent or good and most (80%) rate the technical training provided by the department as either excellent or good. When asked about the importance of training, 78% indicated that additional training is important to them, and 74% stated that more training is needed for them to qualify for higher level jobs with the department.

Training/Additional Training Needs

For reporting purposes, responses indicating that respondents needed courses for their job, for promotion or for personal enrichment were combined into a single category and ranked according to the number of persons who indicated a need to take the course for any reason. As Table 3 illustrates, 102 persons indicated that they needed a course in Stress Management. This is not surprising considering the nature of work in which these respondents are involved. Also ranking high were such job management courses as Decision Making, Creative Problem Solving, Job Organization Skills, and Goal Setting. Such enrichment courses as Exercise, Fitness and CPR were also rated as being needed by respondents.

Table 3: *Rankings of Courses Needed for Job, Promotion or Enrichment*

Course	Needed for Job, Promotion or Enrichment
COMMUNICATION SKILLS	
Public speaking and spoken comm.	94
Effective listening	92
Writing (technical report writing,	91
Ability to communicate tech. infor.	88
Selling ideas to higher management	87
Customer/client relations	86
Persuasion/selling ideas	84
Speed reading	76
INTERPERSONAL SKILLS	
Assertiveness training	92
Productive relation. with co-worker	92
Interviewing skills	87
Team building	87
Coaching/counseling skills	86
JOB MANAGEMENT SKILLS	
Stress management	102
Decision making	98
Creative problem solving	97
Job organization skills	97
Goal setting	96
Conducting on-the-job training	95
How to prepare for promotion	94
Delegating work and responsibility	92
Planning/organizing work flow	87
Time management	86
Project management	81
Budget development and management	79
Orienta. to total dept. operations	76
Foreign languages	66
Unders. impact of foreign competit.	40
COMPUTER SKILLS	
Microcomp./personal comput. applic.	90
Basic or advanced word processing	89
How to use basic microcomputers	80
Using database mgt. on microcompute	79
Programming microcomputers	68
Maintenance and repair of computers	51
Computer interfacing-manufacturing	48
ENRICHMENT	
Exercise	99
Fitness (nutrition, weight control)	97
CPR/first aid	94
Retirement planning	94
Money management	94
Suicide prevention	93
Managing your own behavior	89
Labor/Management Relations	88
How to deal with death and dying	75
Caring for Elderly Relations	74
Understanding Taxes	71
Real Estate Law	65
How to Deal With Divorce	62
Administration of Decedent's Estate	60
Estate Planning and Probate	59
Real Estate Abstracting	49
Unders. the Impact of Foreign Trade	48
How to Stop Smoking	44
Single Parenting	43

Course	Needed for Job, Promotion or Enrichment
LEGAL ADMINISTRATION	
Criminal Law	104
The Juvenile System	100
Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs	99
Intro. to Law the Legal Assistant	99
Family Law	99
Trial Prac. and the Law of Evidence	98
Crime Scene Photography	98
Principles of Criminal Investiga.	98
Crime and Justice in America	98
Criminal Behavior	97
Crim. Law, Evidence and Procedures	97
Legal Research	97
Legal Evidence I - II	96
Collect. and Preserva. of Phys. Evi	96
State and Federal Procedures	96
Survey of Criminology	96
Criminology	96
Criminal Behavior	95
Law Enforce. Organiz. & Admin. I-II	95
Forensics	95
Survey of Criminal Justice	95
Organized Crime and Corruption	93
Trial Prep. and Discovery Practice	93
Legal Aspects of Public Services	93
Admin. Practice and Procedure	93
Research in Criminal Justice	92
Explosive Devices	92
Legal Writing	92
Law Enforcement and the Community	92
Domestic Relations and Consumer Law	91
Constit. Law for Justice Personnel	91
Substance abuse (drugs/alcohol)	86
Compara. Systems of Criminal Justic	86
Substance Abuse in Security	85
Torts	84
Information Security	84
Introduction to Courts	84
Correctional Counseling	84
Fish and Game Regulations	82
Introduction to Security Admin.	81
Probation, Parole and Treatment	80
Intro. to Law Enforcement	78
Analytical Toxicology	77
Corrections and the Community	77
Ethics for the Legal Assistant	75
Adult Correctional Institutions	74
Correctional Law I - II	74
Introduction to Corrections	74
Mgt. of Correctional Facilities	72
Law Office Admin. and Accounting	70

The most significant results of this survey were in the area of Legal Administration. Of 114 respondents, 104 indicated that they would be interested in taking a Criminal Law course, 100 were interested in taking a course entitled The Juvenile System and 99 were interested in taking Narcotics and Dangerous drugs and Introduction to Law: the Legal Assistant. Every course listed under the category of Legal Administration was rated as being needed for job, promotion or personal enrichment by at least 70 persons. This indicates very strong support for the types of courses which are included in an Associate Degree Criminal Justice program.

These results are reflected in the two final questions of the survey which dealt with enrollment in a Criminal Justice program. Only 10% of all respondents are currently enrolled in a Criminal Justice program, and 75 people (68.2% of respondents) indicated that they would be interested in enrolling in such a program if one could be established at PHCC.

Ratings of Supervisors

An additional section of the survey dealt with employee ratings of supervisors and with supervisors' ratings of themselves. In one section of the survey, all employees were asked to answer questions about their supervisors on a scale from 1 (Agree) to 4 (Disagree). Supervisors were then asked to answer the same questions on the same scale and their responses were compared to those of employees who rated them. Average responses were compared and examined for significant differences. As Table 4 indicates, only one significant difference was found. The statement "My immediate supervisor is not fair received an average rating of 3.11 from people who were rating supervisors and

a 3.48 from the supervisors themselves, indicating that supervisors disagreed with the statement more strongly, and felt that they are more fair, than do people who work under them.

Table 4: *Responses to Supervisor Rating Items*

	Ratings of Supervisors	Supervisor Self-Ratings	Mean Response Difference
My immediate supervisor:			
handles problems well.	1.89	1.89	0.00
does not divide work equally.	2.65	2.69	-0.04
works with us to get the job done.	1.71	1.54	0.17
helps me understand our company as a whole.	1.99	1.72	0.27
makes good decisions.	1.90	1.96	-0.06
tells me about what is happening in the department and company.	2.04	1.85	0.19
is not fair.	**3.11**	**3.48**	**-0.37***
evaluates my work to help me improve.	1.89	1.84	0.05
handles stress well.	1.98	1.77	0.21
tells me when I am doing a good job.	2.02	1.69	0.33
tells me when I am doing a poor job.	1.59	1.63	-0.04
provides clear written directions.	2.17	1.92	0.25
provides clear spoken directions.	1.94	1.85	0.09
is a good listener for employees with problems.	1.84	1.65	0.19
provided me with on-the-job training so I could do my work well.	1.94	1.62	0.32
does not know how to resolve conflict in stressful situations.	2.96	2.88	0.08
delegates work to me with a clear understanding of what I have to do and when it has to be done.	1.84	1.80	0.04
manages time well.	1.91	1.96	-0.05

*$p < .05$

Recommendations

Based on information obtained from the survey of Henry County Sheriff's Department and Martinsville Police Department employees, the following recommendations are made:

1. Patrick Henry Community College should make application to the Virginia Community College System to establish an Associate Degree Criminal Justice program.

2. A series of seminars, workshops or courses dealing with topics of interest to respondents, should be offered by the college while application for the program is being processed. Such a series should be designed to take advantage of courses already being offered at the college, provide credit toward a degree wherever possible, and include the following:

   a. Stress Management

   b. Wellness, including Exercise, Fitness and Nutrition (Possibly a 1-hour physical education course)

   c. Financial Planning:
      - Money Management
      - Budgeting
      - Planning for Retirement
      - Personal Finances

   d. Organizational Skills:
      - Decision Making
      - Goal Setting
      - Creative Problem Solving
      - Time Management
      - Job Organizational Skills
      - Project Management
      - Planning and Organizing Work Flow
      - Delegating Work and Responsibilities

   e. Communication Skills:
      - Public Speaking
      - Effective Listening
      - Technical/Report Writing

3. Other law enforcement agencies in the service region should be informed about the proposed program and their support solicited.

4. All persons who participated in this survey should be informed of the results so that they will be aware of the direction the college and law enforcement agencies are taking in their efforts to answer training needs of the community.

5. Establish an advisory committee composed of service area leaders in the law enforcement field and PHCC staff who will work together to design a program which will answer training needs.

The Next Step

After this report has been reviewed by participating law enforcement agencies, the Coordinator of Extended Learning Services should meet with the training directors from all such agencies in the service area to establish a schedule for seminars, workshops and courses listed above and to obtain further documentation needed for making application to establish a Criminal Justice Associate Degree program at PHCC.

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